

The Official USU Newsletter

the pulse

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Photo by Ken Frager

On the cover

CPT Laurie Kwolek carries the GSN guidon during the annual Antietam Road March. More than 60 graduate nursing students joined the first-year medical students for this year's event. See article on page 5.



Compassion, commitment are essential for medical professionals

by Ken Frager



Photo by Thomas Balfour

Marine Gen. James Amos addressed the students and guests for USU's commencement on Saturday, May 15. The 31st Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps spoke about the role the graduates will play in the coming years taking caring of service members and their families.

Marine Gen. James Amos, the 31st assistant commandant of the United States Marine Corps, addressed the more than 200 physicians, advanced practice nurses and scientists who became alumni during commencement of the USU on Saturday, May 15. In a ceremony steeped in military and academic traditions, friends and family also gathered to celebrate with the USU graduating class of 2010 at the Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall.

An active supporter of military medicine, General Amos has praised the efforts of uniformed medical professionals serving at duty stations around the world. He has witnessed their valuable work during multiple deployments and his visits to injured service members.

"Your role as caregivers in our military health system demonstrates your commitment to serve, no matter the degree you are receiving," said General Amos before he imparted his personal thoughts on the USU graduates. "That commitment includes a willingness and ability to take on what I consider to be an almost biblical responsibility."

Reflecting on when his mother passed away following complications from colon cancer surgery, General Amos said that there was "an absence of a sense of responsibility

or accountability on behalf of her caregivers when they missed signs that something was wrong."

"Providing exceptional clinical medicine is only part of your responsibility," said General Amos. "You are a sense of hope for our service members and their families. You will be there to hold the hand of a Marine who lost an arm and a leg in combat... or to spend time with his family as an injured gunny lays in a hospital bed in Germany before being returned to Walter Reed for recovery and rehabilitation. You will commit to the Sailor and to his family that you will do everything you can to return him in better condition than he is that day, so he can speak on behalf of all injured service members about the recovery process, the quality of military health care and the critical role you, as caregivers, serve in our military. And as a leader, you will ensure that mistakes like the one that took my mother don't occur in our military health system."

Shortly after the last student crossed the stage to accept their diploma and the 162 graduates of the School of Medicine recited the Hippocratic Oath and their Oath of Office, the new physicians completed their transition and joined their graduate nursing colleagues as uniformed officers in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service.

New accounting system to benefit USU

by Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosine

The University is implementing the Defense Agencies Initiative (DAI) this fall.

The DAI will replace the currently used College and University Financial System, or CUFS, which was originally put in place in 1986.

“DAI will modernize the way we do business. We are getting a compliant system that will be streamlined with the DoD’s accounting arm, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), and its interaction with 28 different defense agencies,” said Bob Parker, director of the Resource Management Information Office and USU program manager for the DAI implementation. “We currently work with an obsolete accounting system developed in the early 1980s for private higher education.”

Part of the National Defense Authorization Act from 2008, the DAI is the DoD’s initiative to transform and modernize the defense agencies’ financial management processes by streamlining financial management capabilities, eliminating material weaknesses and achieving financial statement auditability for the Agencies and field activities across the DoD.

The new DAI system has many benefits that it brings to USU. Some of these benefits include a single Office of Federal Financial Management compliant solution, common business processes and data standards, access to real-time financial data transactions, a significant reduction in data reconciliation requirements, enhanced analysis and decision support capabilities, standardized line of accounting with the use of Standard Financial Information Structure or SFIS and the use of USSGL Chart of Accounts to resolve DoD material weaknesses and deficiencies.



“Once DAI is implemented and certified, we will have a state-of-the-art, compliant system,” Parker said.

“Hopefully, our users will be much more comfortable with this new system,” Parker said. “Our current system is strictly character-based, so you have to know exactly what key to hit on the keyboard in order to operate it correctly. The new system has graphic user interface capabilities, employing icons, pull-down menus, etc., which should be more intuitive for people to navigate the DAI system.”

But not all faculty and staff will experience this new system immediately.

“Initially USU will deploy the ‘Time and Attendance/Labor’ portion of the DAI in July for only timekeepers and approvers,” Parker said. “We are using a phased approach. Our aim is to eventually have all Government employees do their time and attendance entry online. The DAI financials portion, which primarily affects USU’s financial, logistics and contracting departments, will follow in the fall.”

USU has an outstanding DAI implementation team that has already begun the transformation effort. The business process team leaders include: Gary Osier, director of Logistics; Tony Revenis, director of Contracting, Mike Creenan,

director of Financial and Manpower Management Office; Jim Wolff, USU Financial Services Officer; and Chris Barnett, Civilian Human Resource Directorate’s chief of Information Management and Policy.

But despite the many benefits, Parker and the DAI implementation team members still recognize that this transformation is a change.

“Well, DAI is a new system and many people just don’t like change,” Parker said. “But, we have an advantage here at USU – we are far ahead of many other Defense agencies because of having used CUFS. Like DAI, all of our financial, contracting and logistics functions operate under one system. Other DoD systems have many separate stove-pipe applications that work independent of each other, requiring numerous interfaces. This new system will move the financial business processes under one umbrella.”

Currently, the DAI implementation team is working to create a DAI website to better inform the University community. They are also creating web-based training and face-to-face training with plenty of quick reference materials.

The University’s target date for completion of the new system is October 2010.

Military medicine achieves new heights

by Ken Frager



Courtesy Photo

Then-fourth year students James Winegarner and Michael Chamberlin successfully summited Uhuru Peak, Mt. Kilimanjaro March 7. The recent USU graduates accomplished the feat via the Machame route while on their 2010 Spring Break.

As if taking on the challenges of serving in the U.S. Army and completing medical school weren't enough, two fourth-year medical students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences used their Spring Break to reach greater heights.

James Winegarner and Michael Chamberlin, both recent USU graduates,

successfully summited Uhuru Peak, Mt. Kilimanjaro the morning of March 7 via the Machame route. While not the first to achieve the feat, according to both climbers it probably isn't a common accomplishment for most medical students.

"We share a passion for the outdoors and for challenging ourselves," said Winegarner, who, along with

Chamberlin, has been a leader in the Wilderness Medicine Interest Group at USU. "Between our first and second year, we spent two weeks in British Columbia, Canada, climbing in Squamish. We had been planning since that time for this break in our fourth year, where there was some flexibility in our schedule to accomplish another big challenge."

The duo decided on Mt. Kilimanjaro because of the relatively short duration and non-technical nature of the climb and because of the location. Standing more than 19,334 feet high, Uhuru Peak is the highest summit on Kibo's crater rim. Kilimanjaro itself is the tallest free-standing mountain in Africa and the fourth highest of the seven summits. The Machame route is considered to be the most scenic and most difficult route.

"We had hopes of conducting humanitarian health care while in Africa, in conjunction with this climb, but because of U.S. State Department limitations on official travel in that part of the world right now, the humanitarian portion fell through at the last minute," said Chamberlin.

According to Air Force Maj. (Dr.) Glenn Burns, assistant professor in the department of Military and Emergency Medicine and former faculty advisor to the Wilderness Medicine Interest Group at USU, the achievement of these adventurous students is not surprising given their background and training.

"We attempt to turn out not only exceptional physicians, but competent and well-rounded military officers who are prepared for the demands of challenging, austere and extreme environments," said Burns. "I can't imagine a better way to help them prepare."

"This climb was, at least in my mind, a capstone event and symbolic of medical school itself," said Winegarner. "It was seven very difficult days of non-stop physical exertion with the added effects of altitude and cold weather to deal with, but the feelings we had when we reached the summit were very similar to how we felt walking across the stage at graduation."

AACN Honors TriService Nursing Research Exec



Photo by Ken Frager

The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) presented the Flame of Excellence Award to U.S. Air Force Col. Marla J. De Jong, executive director, TriService Nursing Research Program, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

De Jong accepted the award in May during the National Teaching Institute & Critical Care Exposition. The award

honors sustained contributions to acute and critical care nursing at a high level and with broad reach.

De Jong recently served as the program manager for the Joint Theater Trauma System in Baghdad, Iraq, and Air Force program manager at the Department of Defense Blast Injury Research Program Coordinating Office, where research and practice protocols are developed for the treatment, mitigation and prevention of traumatic injuries.

A former editor of the quarterly journal AACN Advanced Critical Care, DeJong has published more than 35 journal articles, several book chapters and a book, all of which have contributed to shaping military and civilian nursing practice and education, health-care delivery, management and policy.



Photo by MC1 Chad Hallford

GSN Class of 2010 leaves lasting gift

by MC1 Chad Hallford

As their parting project prior to graduating from the USU Graduate School of Nursing, the Class of 2010 donated their time, effort, and financial support to help numerous families seeking relief at a local shelter.

Students volunteered at the Stepping Stones Shelter periodically during their final year, providing general cleaning of the shelter and sorting of winter coats after the shelter's big coat drive. They also hosted a holiday party for six families. "We needed a class project; we brainstormed, and this is what we decided on," said Army Lt. Col. Jean Barido, class president and Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) recent graduate.

"We didn't want to present a plaque. (Our gift) needed to have meaning," said Air Force Capt. Rebekah Peery, also a 2010 FNP graduate. "This is something residents will enjoy all summer."

The class's most recent May 4 efforts culminated their year-long project of assisting the shelter. This class hopes they have set the bar high for future classes of the GSN to develop a continuing relationship with the shelter.

Much of the new front-porch furniture was purchased with gift money provided by the volunteers, as was a range of household and yard improvement items.

"This is about selfless service — it isn't about us," said Barido. "Whether we are taking care of children, fixing our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines, or repairing our neighbors' backyards, we certainly don't have to travel far to give back to the communities in which we live."

Stepping Stones Shelter, located in Rockville, Md., offers homeless men, women and children food and shelter in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

A step back in time

by Christine Creenan-Jones



Photo by Ken Frager

First-year medical and graduate nursing students at the Uniformed Services University (USU) experienced breathtaking pieces of military heritage on the storied fields of Antietam. Leaving behind USU's traditional brick-and-mortar classrooms, they marched across the famous Civil War battlefield, home to the bloodiest one-day

fight in American history.

USU partnered with the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, Md., to ensure an authentic focus on the medical lessons learned and innovations resulting from the Battle of Antietam.

University faculty and Civil War experts provided historical accounts of battlefield medicine while students navigated the eight-mile course. Inside the little Dunker Church, for example, Navy Capt. (Dr.) Trueman Sharp, chair of the Department of Military and Emergency Medicine at USU, told the students that illness – not enemy fire – was the most prolific killer of the battles.

"The disease that seemed to break down the willpower more than any other was chronic diarrhea," said Sharp, in the words of a Confederate Soldier. "The patients seemed not only to lose the desire to live, but all manliness and self-respect. They whined and died in spite of all we could do."

Students carried this vivid imagery with them as they continued the march across Antietam.

"At school we attend many lectures, but this experience helped us to really imagine the challenges of battlefield care," said Public Health Service Ensign Kim Tran.

The dynamic narration continued as the students made their way along an actual Civil War medical evacuation route. This newest piece of the annual road march was designed to illustrate famed surgeon, Jonathan Letterman's echelons of care.

On campus, students learned how this "father of modern battlefield medicine" revolutionized methods for medical organization. At Antietam, they saw how the points of care were organized from the field stations located on the frontlines to the major hospitals located farther away from the battlefield.

"There were a lot of casualties coming through these points," said guest lecturer Robert Burton, director of education at the National Museum of Civil War. "We tried to put a face to the medicine."

Knowing these Soldiers of old, their triumphs and their struggles, will guide the USU students on their journey in military medicine.

AFRRI NCO graduates Warrior Leader Course



Sgt. Christopher Marshall, acting NCOIC of AFRRI's Administrative Support Department, successfully completed the U.S. Army's Warrior Leader Course (WLC) in May. The 15-day course, held at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., is the first course of study in the Army's Non-Commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES).

The WLC curriculum includes instruction in leadership, training and warfighting skills. Graduates successfully pass evaluations in land navigation, physical fitness training, individual training, as well as garrison and field leadership. They are awarded the NCO Professional Development Ribbon.

To wish Sgt. Marshall a "job well done," AFRRI leaders were in attendance for his graduation at Fort Indiantown Gap. From left, Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Matthew W. Deshazo, Chief of Staff Lt. Col. Jennifer S. Lindsay-Dodoo, Sgt. Christopher N. Marshall, and former Deputy Director Col. Donald E. Hall.



Rear Adm. Christine M Bruzek-Kohler, director of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps, was presented the University's Outstanding Service Award by Col. Bruce Schoneboom during a recent visit to San Diego. A dedicated ambassador for USU, Bruzek-Kohler was instrumental in supporting numerous academic and research initiatives. She was directly responsible for facilitating and supporting a process for integrating the Navy Nurse Corps Anesthesia Program (NNCAP) into the USU Nurse Anesthesia Program. The NNCAP has a 47-year history and affiliations with several different universities as degree grantors, including USU. Said Schoneboom, Rear Adm. Bruzek-Kohler "understands, and helped others see, that education is as much of a priority as operations. That support and commitment has been invaluable in helping this program and the USU Graduate School of Nursing achieve great success."

Briefs

Funding Applications:

The USU Merit Review Committee is now accepting applications for the fiscal year 2011 USU Intramural Research Funding.

Applications may be submitted for Pilot, Standard and Exploratory grant awards for funding. This will fund new or revised applications only. Competing continuations will not be considered at this time. These applications are for research in all areas basic, clinical and behavioral.

Projects reviewed under this call will be evaluated for demonstrated relevance to military concerns and/or are specific to the USU mission.

Eligibility for funding from the University's intramural program is restricted to billeted civilian and uniformed faculty members at USU with Full, Associate or Assistant Professor titles.

Late applications will not be accepted and incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Applications are due by June 18, 2010.

Notification of the awards should be complete on or about October 1. Individuals applying for intramural funding, we will need a hard copy of the application with the original signatures by June 18, 2010.

Additionally, applications must be submitted electronically, as a Microsoft Word document, via email to srasmussen@usuhs.mil and vshaw@usuhs.mil. Submissions must also include any additional materials useful to the Merit Review Committee in assessing the proposal.

For further information contact either a grants specialist (Ms. Shaw or Ms. Gibbons) or Susan Rasmussen by phone at 295-3303.

Professional activities:

The Department of Defense and USU policy requires that all

employees, both military and civilian, receive approval for engaging in any activity outside their work environment, which involves their professional expertise or government occupation (whether or not compensated), as well as any activity that involves compensation. This includes serving on the Board of a Non-Federal Organization.

This approval is required prior to engaging in the activity. In order to get approval, any employee can complete a USUHS Form 1004. This completed form must be approved and signed by each department chair or activity head.

These forms are available in the General Counsel's office or online at the USU OGC Web site. Completed forms must be turned in to the General Counsel's office. The form will be routed to the appropriate dean, brigade commander or USU president.

Once processing is completed, a copy of the approved form will be returned to the employee for the employee's records.

Using Computer Resources:

Security incidents continue to be a drain to limited USU Information Assurance manpower. The following highlight current DoD policy and best practices:

Personnel must not install self-coded or non-licensed software on network resources; add, remove, configure, or attempt to modify USU computer operating systems or programs; move audio/visual or network cables, computers or attempt to connect personal computers to the network including MDL and lecture hall spaces; connect personal devices except for those previously authorized by NOC; download pornographic material and store or

display offensive material, such as racist literature, sexually harassing or obscene language or material; store or process classified information on any USU system.

Personnel must not permit unauthorized individuals access to a government-owned or government-operated system or program; access online gambling, games and social engineering sites.

Helpdesk Closure:

The NOC helpdesk is closed for training on Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m.

During this time, you can leave a voicemail message at 295-9800, utilize the HEAT Self Service (<http://www.usuhs.mil/uis/forms/trouble.html>), or email help@usuhs.mil.

If an emergency should arise, please call 295-9870.

Exercise/Fitness Areas:

Physical Fitness training should be conducted in designated areas.

The only authorized space for PT within the university is room G060.

The campus' Student Community Lounge area is also authorized, but only during specified PFT testing dates or times.

2010 Bushmaster/Kerkesner:

The USU field exercises, Operations Bushmaster and Kerkesner will be held July 6 through July 23 at Fort Indian-town Gap, Pa.

Advance personnel will deploy July 6. The main body of personnel will deploy July 10.

Only emergency leave will be granted during this time frame as there are over 145 uniformed personnel, not including evaluators, needed to support this mission.

For further information contact Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Wilson by phone at 319-8207.



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